

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1, 3, and 4 have been amended herein and claims 9-15 have been added herein. Claim 2 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. This Response, submitted in reply to the Office Action dated July 22, 2008, is believed to be fully responsive to each point of rejection raised therein. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Isobe (JP 9-58227). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 recites:

A pneumatic tire in which a polygonal bead core having a bottom extending generally along the tire width direction is embedded in a bead portion, the bead portion having a bead base extending between a bead heel and a bead toe, characterized in that, in the widthwise section of the tire, when first, second and third base points are defined as intersections of lines extending radially inward from an outer end point, a widthwise center point and an inner end point of the bottom of the bead core, respectively, and the bead base, and a maximum displacement point is defined as a point where an interference is maximum, the maximum displacement point is within a range of 25% or less of the width of the bottom of the bead core with the third base point as the center of the range, the interference at the maximum displacement point is 1.1-1.3 times as much as the interference at the second base point, the bead base extends at least between the bead heel and the first base point and has a first tapered portion with a taper angle being identical with or greater by three degrees or less than a taper angle of a bead seat of a standard rim,

wherein the bead base has a second tapered portion extending widthwise outwardly from the maximum displacement point and having a taper angle larger than the taper angle of the bead seat of the standard rim by 10-14 degrees and

a third tapered portion extending widthwise inwardly from the maximum displacement point and having a taper angle identical to or smaller by five degrees or less than the taper angle of the bead seat of the standard rim.

In other words, claim 1 recites that the tire has multiple taper angles along its width. Isobe does not teach or suggest a tire having taper angles as recited in claim 1. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable over for at least this reason.

Applicant notes that in the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that the recitations of taper angles with respect to a tire rim in claims 1-8 “do not further define the structure of the claimed tire because the claims are directed to a tire construction and not a wheel assembly comprising a tire and a rim”. In other words, the Examiner asserts that as the claims are directed to a tire, any recitations with respect to a rim are not entitled to patentable weight. Applicant submits that the Examiner has misconstrued the present claims.

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, “a first tapered portion with a taper angle being identical with or greater by three degrees or less than a taper angle of a bead seat of a standard rim”. As described in the specification, the term “standard rim” refers to “a standard rim... specified in an industrial specification, standard or the like such as JATMA, TRA, and ETRTO which are effective in the regions where a tire is manufactured, sold, or used.” *See* page 3, line 34-page 4, line 3. In other words this recitation is not in reference to a particular tire rim, but a dimension defined by an industrial specification or standard, which would be readily understood by a person of ordinary skill in the art. In other words, claim 1 is reciting that the tire has taper angles equal to or three degrees greater than the taper angle defined by a known industrial standard. Therefore, Applicant submits that this is clearly a structural limitation and must be given patentable weight by the Examiner.

Isobe does not teach or suggest specifically how small the taper angle should be as compared with the taper angle of a bead seat of a standard rim and does not teach the taper angles recited in claim 1. As a person of ordinary skill in the art would know, there are two

types of standard rims, one having a taper angle of 5 degrees and one having a taper angle of 15 degrees. Isobe does not teach a tire having taper angles as claimed based on either of these standards. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 and all claims dependant thereon are patentable for at least this reason, and respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Newly Added Claims

Claim 9 has been added herein and recites features similar to those discussed above with respect to claim 1. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 9 is patentable for analogous reasons. Further, claims 10-14 have been added herein and depend from claim 9, which has been shown above to be patentable over the applied references. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency and respectfully requests that claims 9-15 be allowed.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880 via EFS payment screen. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: October 22, 2008